

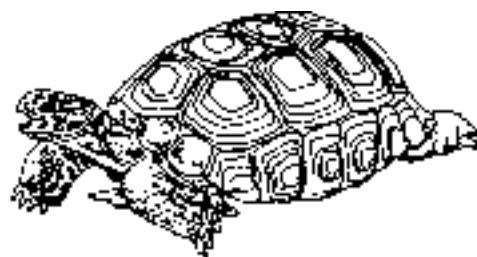


Lake Mead National Recreation Area Environmental Education

FIELD PROGRAM

Grade 1

“Bet You Can’t See Me!”



A short walk helps students compare color variations in the desert and explore animals' use of camouflage.

THEME

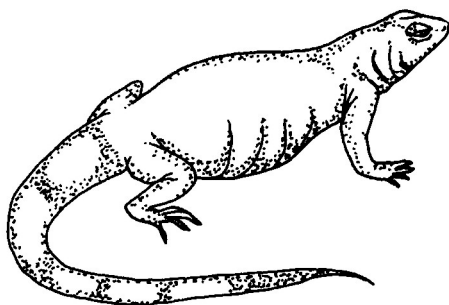
Camouflage is an important adaptation for desert survival.

OBJECTIVES

Students will identify at least three colors in the Mojave Desert.
Students will explore at least two ways that camouflage benefits desert animals.
Students will discover and compare camouflage patterns of at least two desert animals.

VOCABULARY

adaptation - a physical or behavioral feature of an animal or plant that helps it survive in its habitat
camouflage - disguises of color, pattern, and shape that an animal has to match its surroundings
habitat - the place where an animal or plant lives in nature



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Wildlife of the Mojave Desert live in a land of extreme temperatures and little precipitation and depend on a variety of adaptations for their own survival. One adaptation common to many desert animals is camouflage. With the sparse vegetation found in the desert, wildlife need to “blend in” with their surroundings in order to not be seen.

By studying the variation of color in our landscape, you can get a pretty good idea of the colors of desert wildlife. Upon closer inspection, you’ll discover that most animals are not one single color, but a combination of several colors and patterns. These patterns benefit both the predator and the prey.

BEFORE THE FIELD TRIP ACTIVITY

Have your students create their own journals to be used during their program at Lake Mead National Recreation Area. Journals provide a means of recording observations in the field and can be accessed at a later date for comparison studies. Before the field trip have students write the following words (each phrase on the top of a separate page): “Colors in the Desert” and “Animals with Patterns.” Please have the students bring their journals with them on the day of the field trip.

AFTER THE FIELD TRIP ACTIVITY

Allow the students time to explore the school yard to find man-made patterns (play equipment, bricks, etc.) and patterns in nature (tree bark, grass, clouds, etc.). Have them draw a picture of one man-made pattern and a pattern in nature and compare the two.

REFERENCES

Benyus, Janine M., *The Field Guide to Wildlife Habitats*
Simon and Schuster (1989)

Cornett, James W., *Wildlife of the North American Deserts*
Nature Trails Press (1987)

MacMahon, James A., *Deserts*
Alfred A. Knopf (1986)



MAKING A DIFFERENCE! Your students can begin to make a difference wherever they live! Have your class come up with a project using the experience from their field trip to Lake Mead National Recreation Area to show others that they care about our desert community.



Teachers! - check out our new web site with an extensive classroom section:
<http://www.nps.gov/lame/classroom>